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Formula 3a.

16. (previously amended) A compound in accordance with Claim 15 where the HF_2CO group is in the 5 position of the benzimidazole moiety.

17. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 11 that has **Formula 4a.**

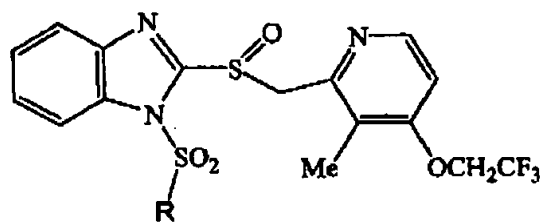
18. (currently amended) A compound in accordance with Claim 11 that ~~includes~~ has only one COOH group, or its pharmaceutically acceptable salt.

19. (currently amended) A compound in accordance with Claim 11 that ~~includes~~ has only two COOH groups, or its pharmaceutically acceptable salt.

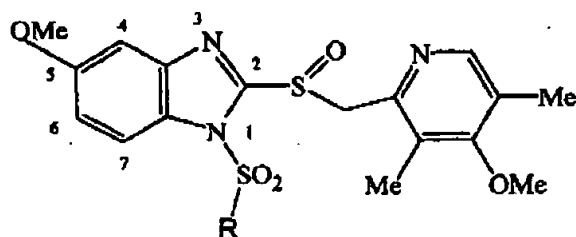
20. (currently amended) A compound in accordance with Claim 11 where R_2 , R_3 and R_4 are hydrogen and R_1 is OCH_2COOH attached in the 4 position on the phenyl ring ~~relativeve~~ relative to the sulfonyl group, or its pharmaceutically acceptable salt.

21. (original) A compound of Formula 1, Formula 2, Formula 3 or of Formula 4

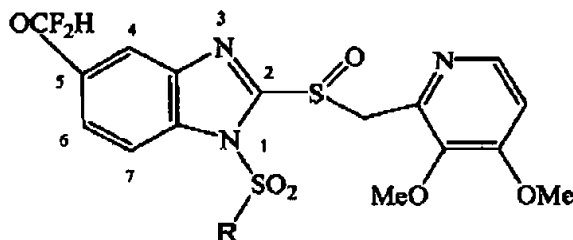
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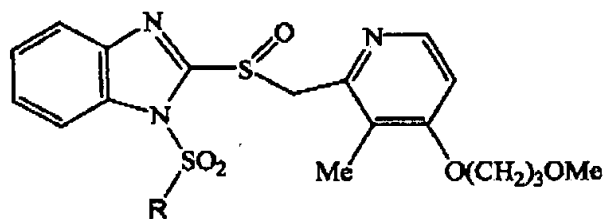
Formula 1



Formula 2



Formula 3

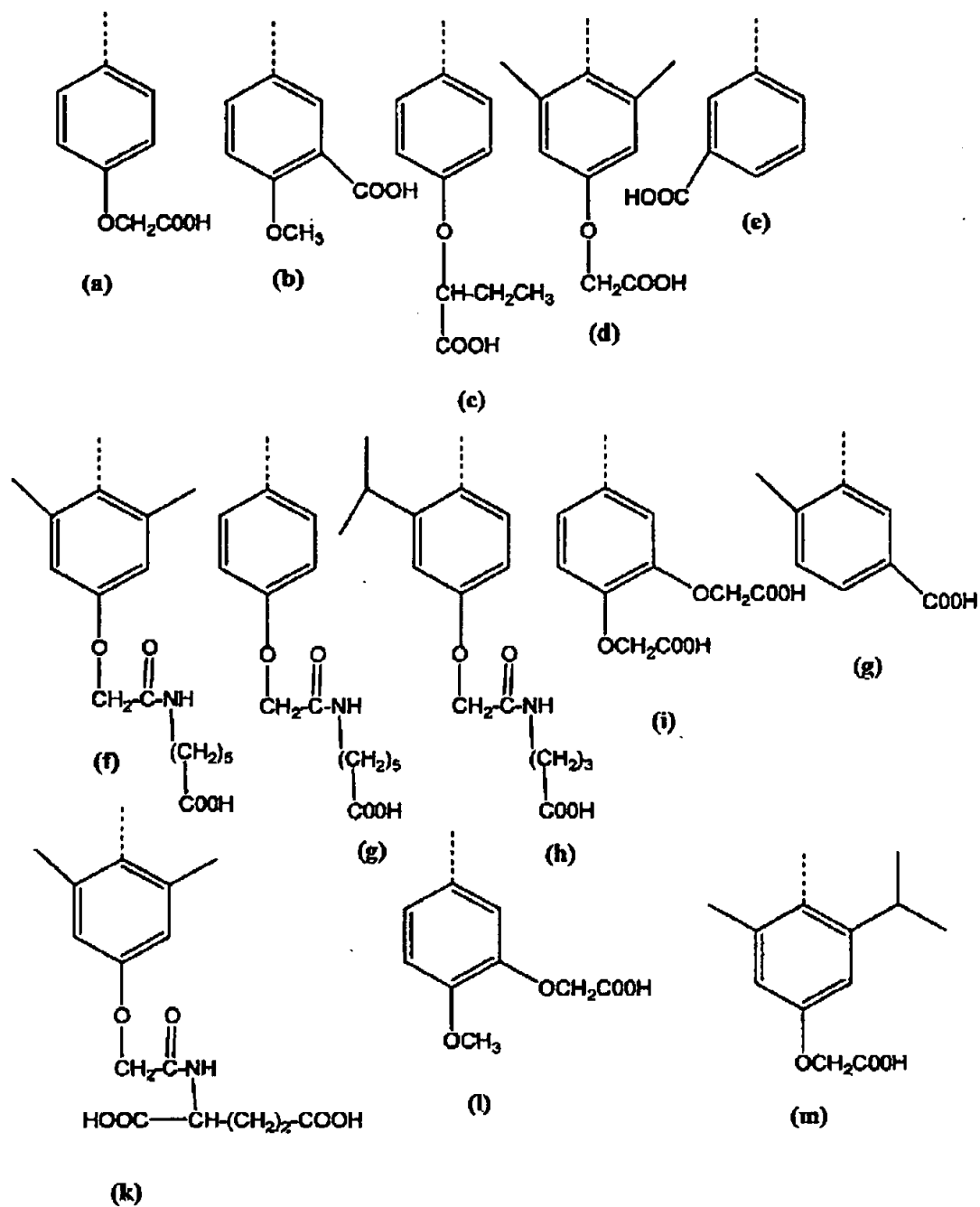


Formula 4

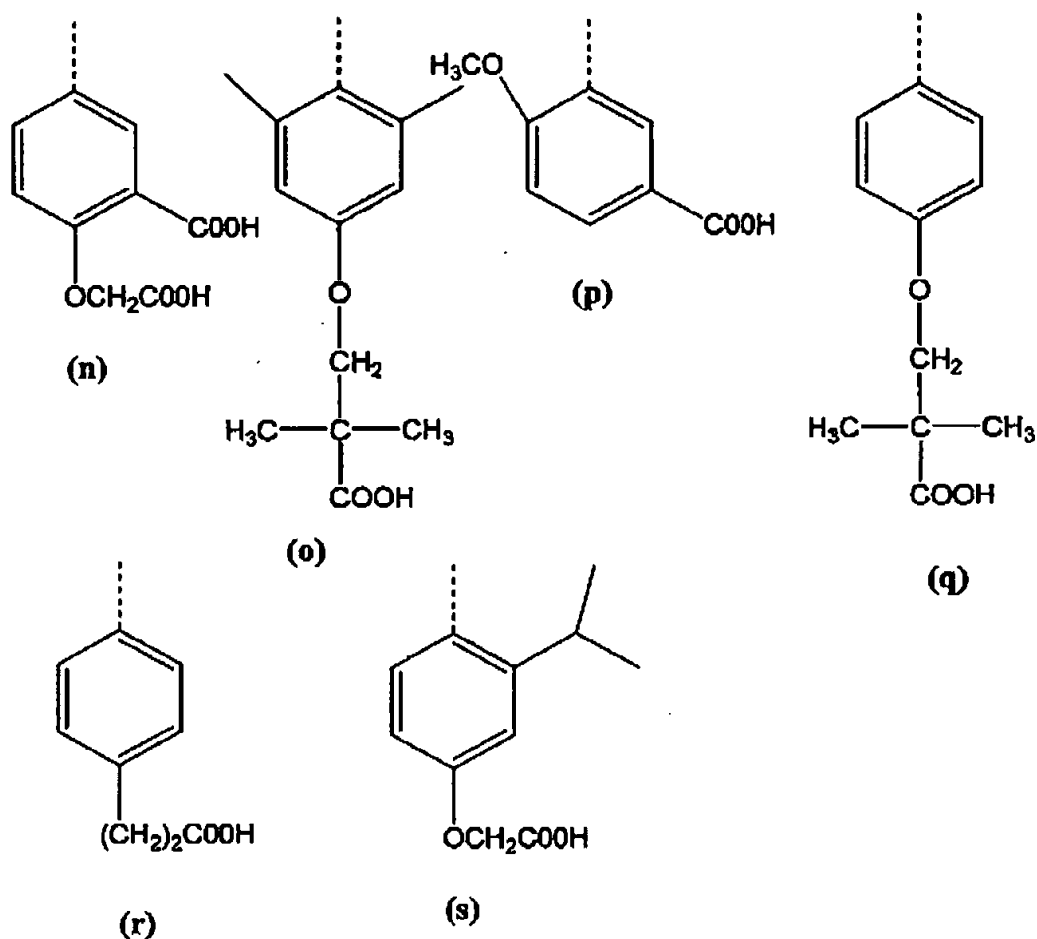
or isomers of the compounds of **Formulas 2 and 3** where the OCH_3 , and HF_2CO groups, respectively are linked to the 6 position of the benzimidazole ring, and

wherein **R** represents the groups selected from **Formulas (a) through (s)**, the dashed line represents the bond connecting the **R** group with the SO_2 group,

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or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of said compound.

22. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 21 of Formula 1.
23. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 21 of Formula 2.
24. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 23 where the CH_3O group is in the 5 position of the benzimidazole moiety.
25. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 21 of Formula 3.

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26. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 25 where the HF₂O group is in the 5 position of the benzimidazole moiety.

27. (original) A compound in accordance with Claim 21 of Formula 4.

28. (canceled)

29. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient and a compound in accordance with Claim 1.

30. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient and a compound in accordance with Claim 11.

31. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient and a compound in accordance with Claim 21.

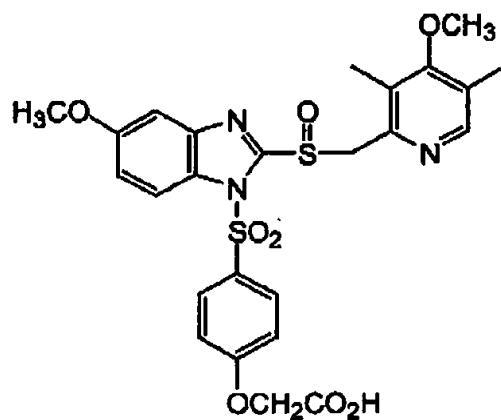
32. (original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient and a compound in accordance with Claim 28.

33. (Canceled)

34. (new) A compound in accordance with Claim 1 having two R₅ groups which represent COOH, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of said compound.

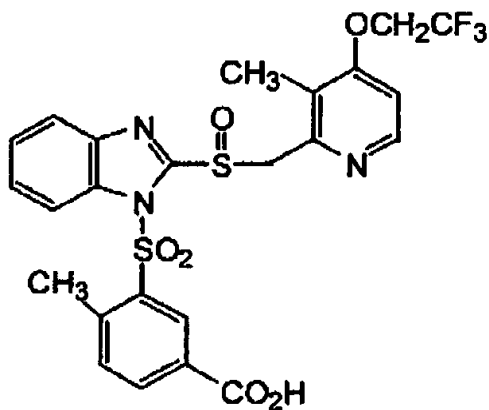
35. (new) A compound of the formula

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or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

36. (new) A compound of the formula



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.